

Good evening.

I have included everyone that was invited to the Neighborhood Meeting on yesterday as well as retail merchants in the 300 block of N Washington that I had contact information for in this email. The meeting held yesterday included City personnel, property owners in the 300 block of N Washington, and committee chairs from boards that have vested interest in the advancement of downtown Marshall. I will recap the meeting for everyone.

*Everyone agrees the end product will be beautiful and much needed

*Retail is in dire straits. They are seeing a DRASTIC reduction in revenue from January 23 compared to January 24. It is a real struggle to maintain business. Even with a business that does not have traditional retail, the reduction in walk in traffic has all but halted. This is an emergency situation for businesses.

*The major concern is on days when there are no workers present, the streets are remaining barricaded and closed. The retailers have hard data that shows as soon as streets are opened that business resumes.

*Another major concern is the lack of communication from construction workers of anything major that will be happening that will directly affect their business. It is requested that everyone know of the work that will be done so business hours can be altered if needed.

*Eric Powell addressed most questions. He stated that it is projected that the end of March of at latest the end of April, that sidewalks will be available at least to part of the block. There is a structural issue that is being discussed on a couple of buildings on the east side and it is possible those sidewalks will not be completed at the same time. Sidewalk forms should be starting to be laid as early as this week.

*E Powell said that there has been a financial adjustment that had to be made based on some "surprise" finds, etc. He stated as soon as the City Commission approves the change the work on that particular thing (I believe the pouring of concrete) will begin the following day. That item is on the agenda for 3/7. Work should begin pending approval on 3/8. He stated that a special called meeting would not be possible on this in efforts to move the work up.

*In reference to trash pick up: E Powell is contacting Republic Waste to let them know that canisters will be placed on the corners for pick up. So, take the canister to the closest corner.

*E Powell said that he has talked with the supervisor of construction, Carl. If construction workers are not present by 10:00 AM, please contact Carl and let him know. It has been agreed that if workers are not there by 10 the streets are to be opened for business for the rest of the day. Eric is going to pass on Carl's contact information.

*Lacy Burson with Main Street, has ordered signage to put at the end of the streets at each barricade. The signs will state that businesses are open, etc.

*Property owners are brainstorming on ways to bring attention and business in the area with possible promos.

*Raven Lenz, representing Main Street but also merchant, suggested that merchants bring balloons, etc to draw attention to their open businesses although people cannot drive up the street.

*Several people are looking into sources of financial relief for lost revenue from merchants due to the construction.

*R Lenz also reported that KMHT has GRACIOUSLY agreed to promote downtown merchants and that they are open for shopping.

Onca again, thank you to everyone for taking the time to meet and plan. These are tough days and we need to encourage one another and pull together as Marshall is known for doing.

Thank you.

Karen Bickerdike